

Remarks

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks.

Claims 1-10 and 35-46 are pending in the application. No claims have been allowed. Claims 1, 6, and 40 are independent.

Claims 11-34 are canceled without prejudice. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the canceled claims in a divisional application.

Election and Response to Restriction

In the Action, the Office restricts the application to one of groups I (claims 1-5), group II (claims 6-10), group III (claims 11-19), group IV (claims 20-23), group V (claims 24-26), or group VI (claims 27-34). The Office asserts the restriction is proper because (1) the groups are distinct as combination and subcombination; and (2) the search required for each of groups I-VI is not required for the other individual groups. [See Action at pages 3-4.] Applicant respectfully traverses the restriction.

The MPEP states, "If the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions. . . . For purposes of the initial requirement, a serious burden on the examiner may be *prima facie* shown if the examiner shows by appropriate explanation of separate classification, or separate status in the art, or a different field of search. . . ." [See MPEP § 803.] Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner has not shown such a burden, particularly with respect to groups I and II. For example, at page 2 of the Action, the Examiner states that *both* group I and group II are classified in class 345, subclass 428. The Examiner has given an identical classification to groups I and II and has provided no other reasons why separate examination of groups I and II would pose a serious burden to the Examiner.

Groups I and II should be examined together. Such action is respectfully requested.

Subject to the foregoing traverse, Applicant provisionally elects group I.

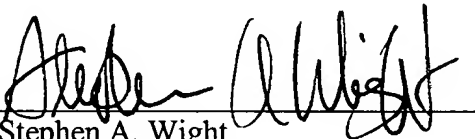
New Claims 35-46

New dependent claims 35-39 depend from independent claim 1 in group I. New independent claim 40, from which new dependent claims 41-46 depend, includes language in large part taken from independent claim 1 in group I. New claims 35-46 should be included in group I.

Respectfully submitted,

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